

Appl. No. 10/003,252

Amendments to the Abstract:

Please replace the abstract with the following amended abstract:

ABSTRACT

An optical data throughput protection switch is provided. ~~The optical data throughput protection switch~~ which provides access to a data-carrying first optical path in a manner which also protects the data from interference from equipment utilizing said access, and eliminates ~~provides for the elimination of~~ optical connectors along the first optical path. The ~~optical data throughput protection switch consists of a controllable switch and~~ includes a controlling means ~~[[,]]~~ and ~~the~~ a controllable switch which is optically coupled to a the first optical path ~~carrying data throughput, and also optically coupled to the termination of a second optical path.~~ The controllable switch is controlled by the controlling means and functions to enable and disable optical coupling between the termination of the second optical path and the first optical path. This may be ~~controlled~~ effected in such a manner that ~~the~~ allows ~~controllable switch allows~~ access to the first optical path when there is no data traffic thereon ~~on the first optical path~~, and denies access to ~~the first optical path~~ thereto when data is present. ~~The, resulting in is that the~~ data throughput on the first optical path ~~can be controllably being~~ protected from signals of the second optical path.